



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EL PASO BROTHERS PLEAD GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY CHARGES

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that Jose Cruz Soto and Romualdo Soto pled guilty to Conspiracy to Harbor Illegal Aliens. Sentencing is scheduled for February 1, 2007, where they face up to ten years in federal prison.

By pleading guilty, the defendants admitted to harboring and working illegal aliens at Soto's Rock Quarry, located in a remote location approximately 4 miles south on Gas Line Road, in El Paso County. The defendants, who are also the owners of the quarry would contract with smugglers to bring the aliens from Tornillo, Mexico, to the quarry where the Soto brothers would pay the smuggling debts.

The aliens were then required to "work off" such debt. While at the quarry, the aliens had lived in cardboard boxes, old trailers, sleeper boxes of old semi-tractors, and they had no running water, sanitation facilities or electricity.

This case was investigated by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Border Patrol, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It is being prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Brandy Gardes.

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